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MWD
METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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August 23, 1998

To: Board of Directors (Water Planning and Resources Committee Action)

From: *for* General Manager

Submitted by: Debra C. Man, Chief
Planning and Resources

Edward J. Meath
Debra C. Man

Subject: Policy Position Regarding the CALFED Bay/Delta Program

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board adopt the proposed Bay/Delta Policy Position Paper for submittal to CALFED and other interested parties.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Board letter proposes that the attached Policy Position Paper (Policy) be communicated to CALFED and other interested parties. The Policy expresses Metropolitan's concerns and needs regarding the CALFED Bay/Delta Program. It is built upon previously adopted Board principles and evaluation criteria and is focused on responding to CALFED's development of a Preferred Program Alternative.

DETAILED REPORT

CALFED's Current Status:

In March 1998, CALFED released a draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR/S) for public review. The draft environmental documentation identifies three programmatic alternatives to solve the problems in the Bay/Delta, and provides detailed information on their performance including each of the "core programs" which vary in scope with each alternative. Based on technical studies, Alternative 3, referred to as a "dual system" best achieved CALFED's four main objectives of ecosystem quality, water quality, water supply reliability, and levee system integrity for statewide benefit. The dual system involves investments in both through-Delta ecosystem and levee improvements, as well as Delta channel improvements, storage, and an isolated conveyance facility. In addition, this alternative, as did the other

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alternatives, contained major investments in water conservation and recycling statewide. CALFED received 2,000 letters during the public comment period on the draft PEIR/S and held 17 public workshops throughout the State.

In July 1998, CALFED issued their draft Preferred Program Alternative. This alternative represents a staged approach to solving the problems in the Delta. Stage 1 would rely more on "soft path" approaches such as conservation, recycling, and groundwater storage to meet reliability needs and would last seven years after the certification of the PEIR/S. Stage 1 would also involve some Delta channel improvements, operational flexibility and levee improvements. CALFED is recommending that the isolated facility component be retained only as a contingency in case Stage 1 investments are not successful in achieving the four main objectives.

CALFED is scheduled to release a revised draft PEIR/S by December 1998 and a final PEIR/S by December 1999.

Proposed Policy Position Paper

The CALFED Program is now developing a Preferred Program Alternative and a revised draft PEIR/S. It is soliciting comments from stakeholders, the public, and other interested agencies. The attached Policy Position Paper is proposed for Board adoption to communicate Metropolitan's concerns and needs regarding the CALFED Bay/Delta Program. It will also direct staff efforts in discussions with State and federal representatives, legislators, and other stakeholder interests. The proposed Policy is built upon previously adopted Board principles and evaluation criteria.

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Attachment